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President Carter
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Carter;

I am Dennis Banks, leader of the American Indian Movement. I am writing out of concern for my good friend, Jim Jones, who has been a loyal and tireless friend to the Indian people, and to all oppressed minorities in the United States. I understand his work in Guyana, as well as his small son, John, are being threatened by some very ugly methods. As a champion of justice through thick and thin, there is no one who could deserve such treatment less than Jim Jones.

I first met Rev. Jones when my wife, Ka-Mook was imprisoned in Kansas, on false charges that were later dropped. At that time, we were penniless and her bail was $20,000. She had had our baby in jail, with the baby immediately removed from her and she was never given the proper medical attention that she needed. Jim Jones learned of our plight, and I was invited to come to the Peoples Temple church along with several of my associates from AIM. The same night I came, Jim Jones raised the money for Ka-Mook's bail from members of his congregation. I couldn't believe that these people, many or most of whom were from poor backgrounds themselves, were making this kind of sacrifice for me. But I learned later that Jim Jones himself has made this kind of sacrifice again and again over the years, and it was just his way, and the way of his people, to extend their help to the farthest limit when an injustice was involved.

Later I witnessed Jim Jones made the object of the same kind of false accusations, and I was approached myself by a man, David Conn, who said he was working with Treasury Department agents, and said he could give me help avoiding extradition (to a certain death in South Dakota jails) if I would only join the people who were lying on Jim Jones. He also implied that things would go badly for me if I did not agree, and it was clear to me that he was trying blackmail. I refused to go along with this scheme, and later exposed the man publicly for what he had done. This same man told me that one of the people he was working with was Grace Stoen, the mother of Jim Jones' child.

I did not know the background of John's situation at the time, but trusted in the integrity of a man I had seen do so much for me and so many others with no thought of reward or praise. Now that I know the true background of the situation, and how Grace Stoen rejected and abandoned her own son, I can well understand how she was working with these agents to try and destroy Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple plus anyone else who got in her way, because I have fifteen children, Mr. President, and this woman didn't care whether I lived or died, whether my children had a father or not, or whether my people were left without a leader. As you may know, it is also common for Indian children to be

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forced from their natural homes and put in foster homes when one parent is gone, so my devoted wife has has the burden of not only my own future, but the future of all the Banks children as well.

One more thing I want to add is that the Peoples Temple are very wonderful people. They work together, and build programs to help children, youth, and senior citizens. They extend friendship and assistance to whomever needs help, and never ask anything in return. Now they are working in Guyana, and saving the lives of Amerindian babies who would have died of malnutrition and gastroenteritis. It take a very sick and cold-hearted person to turn against people like that.

I am sure that Jim Jones and his people are the best thing that could happen to Guyana. And Jim Jones being the kind of person he is, I'm sure he will also be making many Guyanese friends for the United States. It would be a terrible tragedy if anything happened that would hurt his son, John who has a wonderful future there. For him to go back to Grace Stoen, who doesn't even want him except to use him to hurt others, would be like having no future at all. It can't even be considered.

I stand behind Jim Jones keeping his son, and the unethical and vicious actions of Grace and Timothy Stoen being stopped. I urge you to do the same, President Carter. Anyone who carries moral authority as you do, cannot fail to see where justice lies.

I also urge you to further a policy towards Guyana that is humane and generous, because we all need to work together more closely in this hemisphere and help developing nations build a good life for their people. The Guyanese are people who were under colonial rule until a few years ago, and they need and deserve whatever aid America can give to them.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Banks

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